Consumer Behavior in Local Farmers' Markets: a Study of Multiple Behavioral Constructs

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1. Introduction

Even though the mass production, distribution and consumption model have a central place in Brazilian agrobusiness, we have perceived a growing demand for healthy food of distinct quality and known origin (Śmiglak-Krajewska and Wojciechowska-Solis, 2021; Cachero-Martínez, 2020). This demand contemplates not only a greater and greater concern for food safety, but also individual consumer values of sustainability, and respect for nature and society. These choices also reflect the way in which beliefs, attitudes and values are organized and articulated in a system of integrated, collective values (Oliveira *et al,* 2022; Schwartz, 1994, 2012; Rokeach, 1973). These are sentiments that originate in personal values, such as the desire for quality of life, health and well-being, the search for security, personal realizations, and social and other forms of recognition (Oliveira *et al,* 2022; Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz and Bilsky, 1990). This consumer behavior can also have political, ecological and community motivations, mainly when this demand is met by small food networks linked to farmers who produce local, ecologically correct food (Oroian, 2017).

In this sense, these networks play a significant role in local communities, because they function like social structures which establish economic exchanges based on values of trust, tradition and quality, strengthening direct relationships between the producer and the consumer (Berti and Mulligan, 2016), creating an expectation of a quality consumption experience. Frequently consumer expectations are attributed to an expectation of desires created by a search for an ideal standard of performance in a consumption experience of a product or service (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020). These expectations involve the notion of quality, based on an elevated degree of involvement on the part of the consumer, and cannot be described until they have been fully experienced (Rosol and Barbosa, 2021). This occurs because quality is a concept which permeates everyday issues, and it can be directed towards the consumption of food, goods, services and even lifestyles. It is true that the perception of quality orients consumer decisions, and it has been an essential element in corporate competitive strategies (Souki *et al,* 2020).

In this way, considering the perception of quality and the context of this study, we have observed that small local producers try to connect with consumers through short food chains, adopting rigorous control of their processes in providing quality services and products which are safe and free from agrotoxins, which benefit the value chain (Stylidis et al, 2020; Oroian, 2017). Ensuring consumer satisfaction through production processes of superior quality is crucial, because aggregated value and consumer experiences are interlinked in this market (Davis and Hodges, 2012). This facilitates the interaction between farmers and consumers, promoting the recognition of the value of what is being consumed (Rosol and Barbosa, 2021). These farming networks favor a collective point of view and often function as a virtuous combination of cooperation and competition, resulting in the interdependent relationships of social and economic structures (Nachum, 2021).

Thus, within the context of this study, there is a combination of product and service, and this is why it is important to emphasize that one of the components of note in the consumer experience is also the perception of the quality of the service. In many sectors, the result of recurring positive experiences creates a feeling of satisfaction, which extends from initial expectations to the post-experience evaluation (Puspasari, *et al.*, 2022). In this sense, Stylidis *et al.* (2020, p. 40) present the concept of perceived quality, integrating the attributes of the product with the personal consumption experience. The authors define perceived quality as the

"place where the significance attributed to the product, its form and sensory properties and its execution, meet the human experience driven by the interaction between product quality and its context."

Given this, and the possible relationships between perceived quality, personal values, satisfaction, the perception of value, purchase intentions, and the experience of consumers who go to local farmers' markets, we consider the context of this study to be "local farmers' markets supplied by rural producers". This space has dynamic and peculiar characteristics, which permit a discussion aimed at the comprehension of the consumers at local farmers' markets. It is known that consumers at "direct markets" are frequently studied as a homogeneous group, motivated above all by alternative practices in the acquisition of food, such as the experience of buying in local farmers' markets and organic stores or subscriptions to boxes of food (Rosol and Barbosa, 2021). In this sense, in order to contribute to these studies and considering the importance of this subject, this study seeks the following objectives: a) to verify the direct impacts of the perceived quality among consumers at local farmers' markets on consumer satisfaction and the consumption experience; b) to investigate the impacts of personal values on consumer satisfaction, the consumption experience, and the perception of value; c) to test the impacts of the consumption experience on satisfaction and purchasing intentions; and d) to confirm the positive impact of satisfaction on consumers' purchasing intentions at local farmers' markets.

Considering the quality of the food delivered by small farmers, this study can help in understanding the impact of global perceived quality on the experiences of consumers who frequent local farmers' markets and their purchasing intentions. In addition, other results of this study will help us understand how this market functions and promote elements, which can strengthen consumers' personal values, thus affecting their satisfaction, consumption experiences and purchasing intentions.

## 2. Development of the Concepts and Hypotheses

Despite the growing interest in the subject of healthy food of known quality and origin, the sustainability and survival of small farmers' networks still present a challenge (Oroian, 2017; Berti and Mulligan, 2016). Small farming producers in developing nations are living with situations which put the survival of their practices at risk, as well as the services they provide which meet the requisites of product quality and consumer expectations. In this sense, it is important to consider the mechanisms, which favor direct ties between consumers and producers, in a relationship, which strengthens family agriculture and the equity of local arrangements. In this manner, to understand how these mechanisms function and whether they are aligned in these value chains, planning effective coordination among the actors who interact in the network, in order to improve the quality and performance of the food and services offered in local farmers' markets could prove useful.

After all, as Solomon *et al.* (2017) and Oliveira *et al,* (2022) note, buying decisions can be immediate in certain circumstances, but in other situations they may take days, months or even years. This may be especially true when we consider the growing involvement of the consumer in purchases related to more healthy food (Śmiglak-Krajewska and Wojciechowska-Solis, 2021; Nasir and Karakaya, 2014). We can also equally perceive a valorization of the production process associated with a value chain committed to agroecology and small farmers' networks (April-Lalonde et al, 2020). Thus, we can consider agroecology to be a farming collection and processing system based on existing local resources which strengthens its ecosystem, and relies on ecological procedures and equitable food procedures for its distribution, consumption and removal (Rosol and Barbosa, 2021).

To understand the buying decision-making process within this context, we need to identify various aspects perceived by consumers in their consumption experiences in farmers'

markets, the object of this study. After contextualizing this work, within a perspective, which contemplates the relationships between global perceived quality, satisfaction, personal values, perceptions of value, purchasing intentions, and the consumption experiences of consumers who frequent local farmers' markets, we will present the hypothetical model (Figure 1) for the better understanding of the hypotheses which will be developed below.

Figure 1 – Hypothetical Model
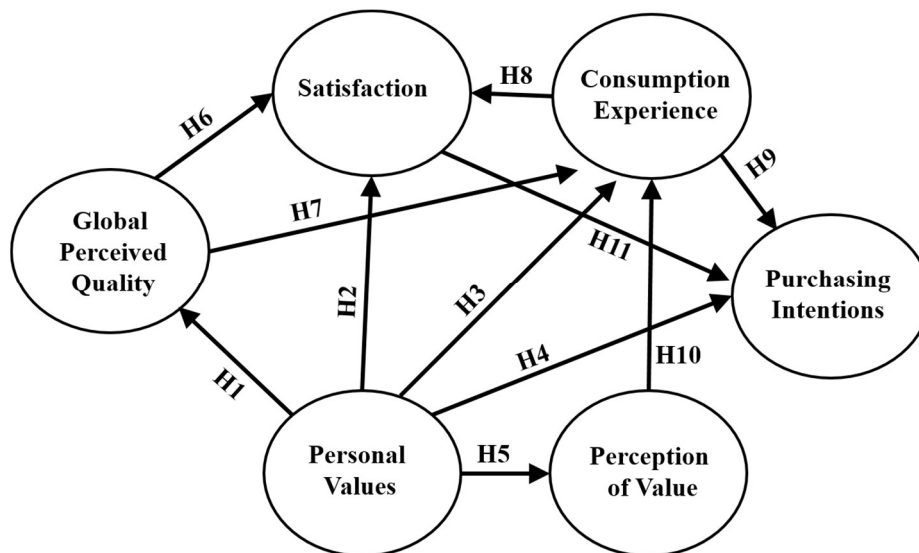
Source: Elaborated by the Authors.

2.1 Development of Hypotheses Involving Personal Values

Personal values are an important classification in a value system which helps consumers choose between the alternatives present in daily decisions (Oliveira *et al*, 2022; Kraatz et al, 2020). Personal values, in turn, are influenced by the socio-cultural context of the consumer, and therefore identifying personal values which can influence consumer choices regarding a product or service is also understanding the influence that context plays in these behaviors (Oliveira *et al.,*2020; Rokeach, 1979). Schwartz (2012; 1994) argues that values: (a) are intrinsically linked beliefs; (b) refer to desirable objectives that motivate an action; (c) transcend specific situations and actions; (d) serve as standards and criteria for evaluating daily activities, policies, people and events, deciding what is positive or negative and what is worth doing or avoiding; (e) are classified by importance in relation to others to create a hierarchy of priorities; and (f) are classified by the relative importance of various values guide attitudes, behaviors and actions. In addition, the perception of value directed at consumption behavior is influenced by multiple consumption values which are functional, emotional, social and epistemic values, and each consumption value makes different contributions depending on various contexts (Oliveira *et al*, 2022; Caber *et al.*, 2020; Sheth *et al.*, 1991).

When directed towards food consumption, values like food security, health benefits, cleanliness, hygiene, taking care of oneself, as well as knowing the origin of food and how it is produced, can be considered emotional values. As a complement to this, Allen (2001) relates that there are direct and indirect relationships between humans and their consumer purchases. Thus, the consumer buying process involves various steps which begin with the appearance of needs and desires, which are followed by collecting information, choosing a product or service, and then the purchase and post-purchase reaction (Oliveira *et al*, 2022; Munkácsi, 2018; Lopes

and Silva, 2011). In this process, the consumer tends to perceive the quality and value of the product, which can affect satisfaction as well as the consumption experience in a positive or negative manner (Souki et al, 2020; Munkácsi, 2018). After perceiving that personal values can influence, in some way, the perception of quality, the perception of value, satisfaction, the consumption experience, and purchasing intentions, this study presents the following hypotheses which will be tested.

H1. Personal values directly and positively affect consumers' perceived quality in local farmers' markets.
H2. Personal values directly and positively affect consumer satisfaction in local farmers' markets.
H3. Personal values directly and positively affect the consumption experience of consumers who frequent local farmers' markets.
H4. Personal values directly and positively affect purchasing intentions among consumers in local farmers' markets.
H5. Personal values directly and positively affect the perceptions of consumers in local farmers' markets.

2.2 Global Perceived Quality, Satisfaction and the Consumption Experience

In general terms, "quality" is a somewhat philosophical issue and a routine concept, which can be defined by product and service characteristics, as well as the performance of individuals, organizations and human societies. Even though quality has an underlying nature which belongs to many contexts, its definition is relative, therefore it can have different meanings depending on the context and group of criteria involved (Seopela and Zulu, 2022). According to Zeithaml (1988), quality can be divided into objective and perceptive. While "objective quality" refers to a measurable and verifiable evaluation with certain product attributes of a predetermined standard of quality, "perceived quality" can be seen based on a subjective consumer judgement, depending on its individual context. However, different definitions of quality are appropriate for different circumstances, and each one has its strong points and weak points related to the measurement, utility and relevance of the concept. A way of analyzing the quality of a product or service, for example, is recognizing its various dimensions and the properties which can affect the satisfaction and preferences of consumers (Puspasari *et al,* 2022, Dam and Dam, 2021; Souki *et al,* 2020; Abdullah *et al.*, 2018). To Xie and Sun (2021), satisfaction is directly linked to consumer expectations and also related to the quality delivered, corresponding to expectations in a consistent manner. This quality refers to the quality perceived by consumers and their evaluations of a product or service. Thus, we can propose the following hypothesis:

H6. Perceived quality directly and positively affects consumer satisfaction in local farmers' markets.

Zeithaml (1988) also argues that the quality of a service is perceived by a client during the delivery process, and the consumption experience is fundamental to a positive evaluation from the consumer. The quality of service is also considered a perceived attribute based on the client's experience in relation to the service which the client perceived during this service delivery process. According to Stylidis et al (2020), the process in which clients perceive and sample the product's attributes can be classified as an experience of quality. In this way, we can say that the consumer experience consists of knowledge, motivation, emotions and expectations, in which not all of the attributes may be perceived, and some may even be totally

ignored (Stylidis et al, 2020). Considering the relationship between perceived quality and the consumption experience, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H7. Perceived quality directly and positively affects the consumption experience of local farmers' market consumers.

2.3 Consumption Experience, Satisfaction, and Purchasing Intentions

Even though the term "buying experience" only appeared in the marketing literature after the pioneering article by Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), we can identify previous studies which admitted the importance of recognizing consumer expectations related to functional and symbolic attributes of the buying experience. Recognition of the consumption experience has motivated various subsequent studies, initially directed at understanding the consumer experience in a physical store, but at the same time, it is important to have a managerial point of view to analyze the consequences of a client's visiting a store and as a result the buying experience (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020; Ribeiro and Prayag, 2019; Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). The consumption experience gains relevance when the choice of products and/or services is associated with the dependence of the experience itself, when for example, more relevant attributes are only displayed at the time of purchase, such as watching films, taking trips, and using perfumes, among other things, whose quality can only be evaluated after consumption (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020). Thus, to minimize the risks perceived by consumers and associated with choosing products, consumers probably will trust their previous experiences and familiarity with previous products in their purchasing intentions related to new (and less familiar) products (Moon, Jalali and Song, 2022).

H8. The consumption experience directly and positively affects consumer purchase intentions in local farmers' markets.

H9. The consumption experience directly and positively affects consumer satisfaction in local farmers' markets.

2.4 Perception of Value and the Consumption Experience

Perception of value can be understood as a weighted result, based on standards, rules, criteria, norms, objectives or ideals on the part of the consumer given a certain choice. It is related to how much the consumer is willing to pay for something, considering the emotional and tangible costs and benefits of a product or service (Kim and Park, 2017). Traditionally, perception of value has been associated with the utility value of a product or service. This approach originated in neoclassic economics which analyzes consumers based on the principle of rationality, where choices are made based on the degree of utility of goods, their perceived value, associated with the sense of satisfaction and well-being for having met a given need (Caber *et al.*, 2020). This is a one-dimensional approach of a functional nature, defined in terms of performance (quality) and price. It is a decision associated with a weighing of benefits and sacrifices, based on the idea of utilitarianism, which in turn is based on the pricing theory which postulates consumer price-quality perceptions as being the main determinants of perceived value (Zeithaml, 1988).

In this sense, its main characteristics are associated with an interaction between the consumer and the product. It is something subjective which changes in accordance with personal and situational characteristics and is of a preferential, perceptual and cognitive-affective nature (Caber *et al.*, 2020; Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007). Within this

context, consumer behavior considers the importance of the perceived value associated with the buying experience (Davis and Hodges, 2012) based on a variety of motives which consumers can consider in their choices, ranging from functional advantages to social benefits, health and well-being which can be obtained by choosing a given product or purchasing location. Thus, perceived value can convey the idea that the greater its perception among consumers, the greater their satisfaction will be and the better their experiences (Kim and Park, 2017). In addition, consumers desire that their buying experiences will be easy, convenient, pleasant and secure (Souki et al, 2020). With this, we can formulate the following hypothesis to be confirmed.

H10. Perceived value directly and positively affects the consumption experiences of consumers at local farmers' markets.

2.5 Satisfaction and Purchasing Intention

Consumer satisfaction is one of the main concepts in Marketing, and it always has been considered the essence of success when a brand is considered a priority in consumer preferences in a highly competitive market (Souki et al, 2020). Its definition is associated with the measure of how products and/or services meet or exceed consumer expectations, or by the consumer's attitude toward a product and/or service after its utilization (Nguyen *et al.*, 2018). If before competitive advantage was based on satisfying the consumer and defeating competitors, today it is defined by understanding the consumer experience. Satisfaction can be associated with significant results from marketing, directed towards creating a connection between the various steps of the consumer's journey. It can also be defined by the perception of felicity or frustration on the part of the consumer, which is the fruit of a comparison between the performance of a product and/or service and the expectations which have been created (Oliver, 2014). Meanwhile, purchasing intentions originate in the predisposition to acquire a good or service, and they are a combination of desire, capacity, chance and potential for a consumer (Dash *et al.*, 2021). Purchasing intentions also represent the possibility that what individual clients have bought is an important indicator of their future consumption behavior (Yu *et al.*, 2021). According to Konuk (2018), there is evidence which reveals that satisfied consumers are more likely to buy and recommend a product or service than other people. Thus, we will propose the following hypothesis:

H11. Satisfaction directly and positively affects purchasing intensions of consumers in local farmers' markets.

3. Methodology

In order to achieve the objective traced and tested by the hypotheses we have raised, this study will employ a quantitative approach of a descriptive nature. In terms of the subject of this study, it is a farmers' market located in the interior of Brazil in a region known for the vocation of farming. For the data collection we used a structured questionnaire applied over a period of three months. The questions that made up the scales were adapted from other instruments which have already been tested and validated, and they are based on 5-point intervals in which 1 signifies "totally disagree" and 5 "totally agree". Table 1 presents the tested constructs, the number of items in the scale, and the original source of the scales.

Table 1 – Presentation of the Scale Items Utilized in this Study

Constructs		Number of Items	Origin of the Scales
Perceived Quality	Infrastructure	8	Souki *et al.* (2020)
	Reputation	3	
	Accessibility	3	
	Quality of Services	6	
	Atmosphere	4	
	Consumer Guidance	4	
	Quality of Products	6	
Personal Values		6	Oliveira *et al.* (2020)
Satisfaction		4	Nguyen *et al.* (2018)
Consumption Experience		5	Ribeiro and Prayag (2019)
Perception of Value		4	Abdullah *et al.* (2018)
Purchasing Intentions		4	Nasir and Karakaya (2014)

Source: Developed by the Authors

The data collection was realized in two forms: through an electronic form developed on the Google Forms platform, publicized on the WhatsApp and Facebook social networks, as well as a printed form applied in person at the market on Wednesdays from 4 to 8 pm, and Sundays from 6 am to 12 noon. It should be noted that both collected samples were defined by convenience and accessibility, and thus they are non-probabilistic (Malhotra *et al.*, 2017).

The study's participants were men and women of 18 years of age or older who freely consented to participate in the study, obeying the criterion of being assiduous consumers at this market, visiting it at least once a month. The two forms of application for this instrument resulted in a valid sample of 278 questionnaires. In terms of the data analysis, we employed Confirmatory Factor Analysis which made it possible to verify whether the observed data behaved as envisaged theoretically (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Confirmatory Factor Analysis also makes it possible to validate the analyzed data and constructs, because it enables the identification of possible problems in the data, with the theory that supports it, or both (Hair *et al.*, 2017; Malhotra *et al.*, 2017). The technique utilized in this work to operationalize Confirmatory Factor Analysis was Structured Equation Modeling (Hair; Black *et al.*, 2019). This technique makes it possible to make adjustments between the observed data in a hypothetical model (Mateos-Aparicio, 2011).

The statistical model used was Partial Least Squares, recommended for investigations which have "small" quantities of data and/or models with theoretical support which are relatively unexplored (Hair *et al.*, 2011). Some of the advantages of using Structure Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares is that this technique does not require large samples and also does not make assumptions about the normality of the data (Ringle, Silva and Bido, 2014; Mateos-Aparicio, 2011). The SmartPLS ™ 2.0 M3 software was used to perform the Structured Equation Modeling (Ringle *et al.*, 2015). Microsoft Excel was used to describe and organize the data into tables.

4. Data Analysis and Results

4.1 Description of the Sample

The sample counted on 278 participants, 43% of which were female and 57% male. The average age of these market consumers was roughly 42, and in terms of education, 33% had an

elementary education or less, 42% had at least completed their secondary schooling, and 25% had a college degree or more. Most of the participants were married or in a stable union (64%), with 28% being single and 8% divorced, separated or widowed. In terms of family income, 25% had a monthly income of R$ 2,164 or less; 20% had a monthly income between R$ 2,164 and R$ 3,246; 20% had a monthly income between R$ 3,246 and R$ 4,328; 21% had a monthly income between R$ 4,328 and R$ 6,492; and 14% had monthly incomes of over R$ 6,492. Finally, in terms of the frequency of their visits to this farmers' market, 19% went twice a week; 36% went once a week; 10% went three times a month; 12% went twice a month; and 23% went once a month.

4.2 Evaluation of the Measurement Model

The first step of Confirmatory Factor Analysis consists of verifying whether the factor weights (λ) of the variables for each construct are greater than 0.6, in accordance with the orientation of Hair; Black *et al.* (2019). After analyzing the 57 variables of the structural model, only one variable of the Infrastructure construct was less than 0.6. In this instance, the variable in question was removed from the model leaving the Infrastructure construct with just 7 variables. A Bootstrapping test was also performed to verify whether the factor weights were significant with p-values < 0.05. All of the 56 variables had a significance less than 0.001. The next step consisted of the Reliability and Convergent Validity of the constructs which make up the model. To confirm the reliability of the model, Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability were examined. Cronbach's Alpha is a measure which is frequently utilized as an indicator of the reliability of scales, and verifies whether its variables are homogeneous. Basically, it tests the intercorrelations of a group of variables (Malhotra *et al.*, 2017). Values above 0.7 for Cronbach's Alpha indicate that the utilized scale is reliable (Hair; Black *et al.*, 2019). In this sense, the results presented in Table 2 demonstrate that all of the constructs have values greater than 0.8, indicating that the scales and variables utilized in this work are appropriate.

Table 2 – Reliability and Convergent Validity of the Studied Constructs

Constructs	AVE	CR	CA
Accessibility	0.929	0.975	0.961
Atmosphere/Environment	0.905	0.974	0.965
Consumption Experience	0.848	0.965	0.955
Physical Infrastructure	0.641	0.926	0.907
Purchasing Intentions	0.871	0.964	0.951
Consumer Guidance	0.921	0.979	0.971
Perception of Value	0.744	0.921	0.884
Global Perceived Quality	-	0.974	0.971
Quality of Products	0.826	0.966	0.957
Quality of Services	0.898	0.982	0.977
Reputation	0.920	0.972	0.956
Satisfaction	0.928	0.981	0.974
Personal Values	0.833	0.968	0.959

Note: Cronbach's Alpha (CA), Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE).
Source: Elaborated based on research data.

Composite Reliability is used to evaluate whether the sample is free from biases, or whether the responses as a whole are reliable. In exploratory studies, values above 0.70 are considered satisfactory. Greater values generally indicate greater levels of reliability (Hair; Risher *et al.*, 2019). Thus, in analyzing Table 2, we verified that all of the constructs had high levels of composite reliability. Finally, the convergent validity of each construct was evaluated. Convergent validity is how much each construct converges to explain the variance of its items. The metric used to evaluate the convergent validity of a construct was the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Acceptable values should be greater than 0.50, indicating that the construct explains at least 50 percent of the variance of its items (Sarstedt *et al.*, 2017). The results presented in Table 2 demonstrate that all of the constructs have a satisfactory AVE, or in other words, they are greater than 0.60. The last step is verifying the Discriminant Validity (DV) of the measurement model.

The DV is obtained by verifying whether the constructs or the latent variables are independent of each other (Hair *et al.*, 2014). One of the ways to verify discriminant validity is by using the criterion advocated by Fornell and Larcker (1981). This criterion is obtained by comparing the square roots of the AVE values for each construct with the correlations between the constructs. Thus, the square roots of the AVEs should be greater than the correlations between the constructs as presented in Table 3.

Table 3 – Discriminant Validity of the Studied Constructs

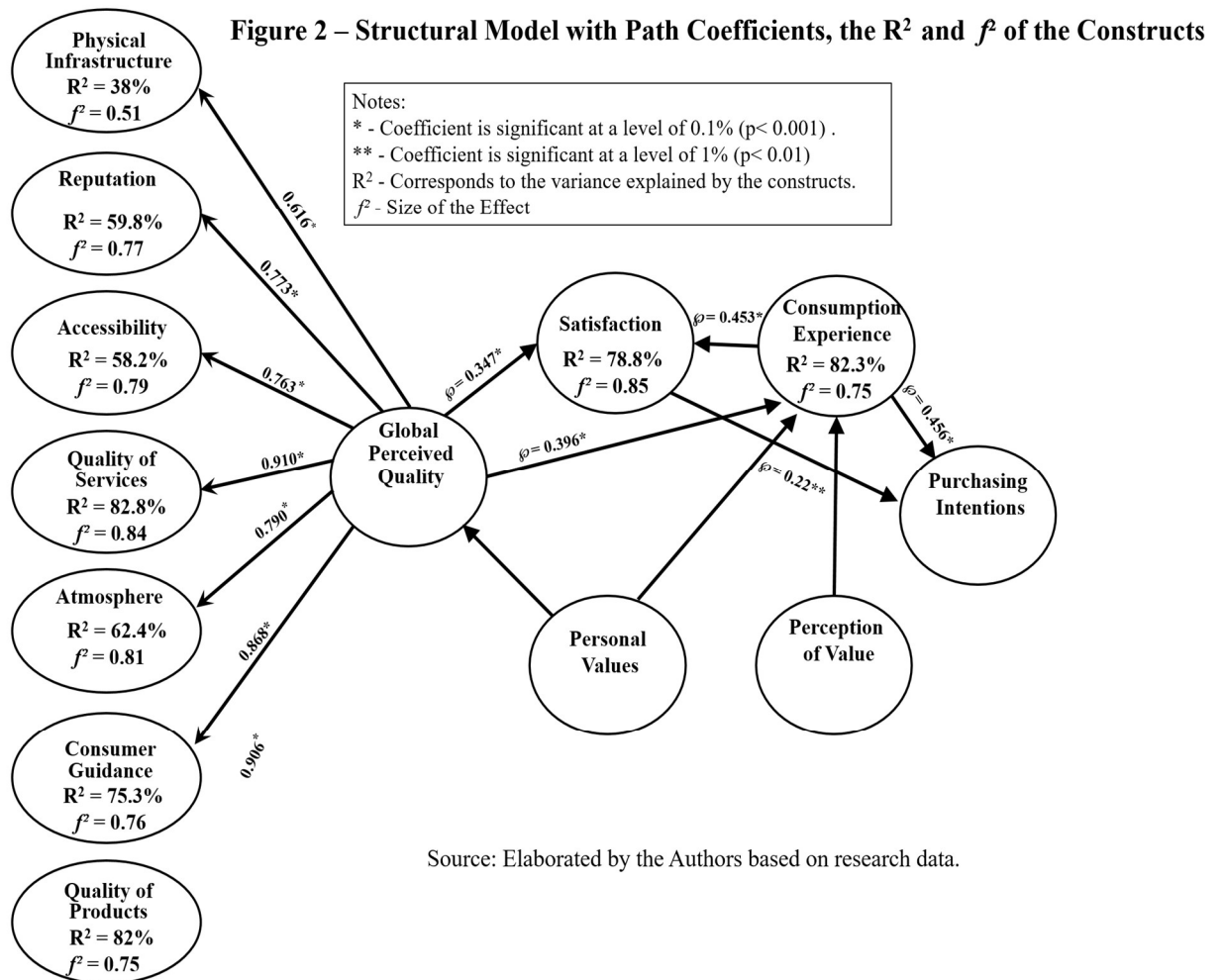| Item	Constructs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Accessibility	0.963*											
2	Atmosphere/Environment	0.531	0.951										
3	Consumption Experience	0.636	0.665	0.921									
4	Physical Infrastructure	0.345	0.529	0.509	0.801								
5	Purchasing Intentions	0.675	0.620	0.831	0.406	0.933							
6	Consumer Guidance	0.567	0.632	0.770	0.431	0.658	0.960						
7	Perception of Value	0.626	0.725	0.813	0.510	0.795	0.690	0.862					
8	Quality of Products	0.690	0.620	0.830	0.457	0.770	0.756	0.740	0.909				
9	Quality of Services	0.611	0.665	0.780	0.470	0.715	0.811	0.732	0.797	0.948			
10	Reputation	0.745	0.525	0.643	0.370	0.673	0.619	0.624	0.679	0.617	0.959		
11	Satisfaction	0.644	0.693	0.864	0.522	0.786	0.748	0.762	0.783	0.747	0.615	0.963	
12	Personal Values	0.605	0.686	0.849	0.487	0.783	0.709	0.764	0.791	0.690	0.624	0.798	0.913

Note: * Square Root of AVE.
Source: Elaborated based on research data.

Analyzing Table 3, we verified the existence of Discriminant Validity between the constructs, or in other words, the constructs of the tested model are measuring different concepts. Thus, the square root of the AVEs is greater than the correlations between the constructs.

4.3 Nomological Analysis and the Testing of the Hypotheses

The nomological analysis of the structural model and its constructs is a crucial step in testing the hypotheses (Hair *et al.*, 2017). In this step, the researcher evaluates the reliability of the measures, and whether these measures are appropriate for effectively sustaining the hypotheses regarding the relationships between the variables as predicted by theory (Hagger *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, it is vital to evaluate whether the causal associations suggested by theory are in fact sustained by the collected data. According to Malhotra *et al.*, (2017), nomological analysis is a type of validity that seeks to confirm the significant correlations between the

constructs. In this sense, Figure 2 presents the relationships and paths between the constructs, the significance of these paths, the coefficients to determine R^2 and the Sizes of the Effects (f^2) of the constructs.

Figure 2 – Structural Model with Path Coefficients, the R^2 and f^2 of the Constructs

Source: Elaborated by the Authors based on research data.

To verify the robustness of the structural model, it is necessary to analyze the Path Coefficient ($\wp$). The path coefficient represents the hypothetical relationships between the constructs which are significant (Hair; Black *et al.*, 2019). The Bootstrapping test is used to verify the significance of the paths, and it makes the standard error indicator and the *t* Test available (Aguirre-Urreta and Rönkkö, 2018). To analyze Figure 2 and Table 4, we verified whether the paths between all of the constructs presented low standard errors (<0.07). The lower the standard error, the higher the critical values of the *t* Test will be. The *t* Test makes it possible to verify the level of significance (p-value) of the paths. In this study, we chose a bicaudal *t* Test. The critical values of *t* for a bicaudal test are 1.65 (level of significance = 10%), 1.96 (level of significance = 5%) and 2.57 (level of significance = 1%) (Aguirre-Urreta and Rönkkö, 2018).

Table 4 – Path Coefficients and Tests of the Hypotheses for the Structural Model

Relationships between the Constructs	Path Coefficients ($\wp$)	Stand. Errors	*t* Test	p-value	Hypotheses
Global Perceived Quality → Satisfaction	0.348	0.057	6.140	0.001	H6 Confirmed
Global Perceived Quality → Consumption Experience	0.396	0.045	8.658	0.000	H7 Confirmed
Personal Values → Satisfaction	0.129	0.045	2.891	0.022	H2 Confirmed
Personal Values → Global Perceived Quality	0.817	0.018	44.770	0.000	H1 Confirmed
Personal Values → Consumption Experience	0.370	0.044	8.326	0.000	H3 Confirmed
Personal Values → Perception of Value	0.274	0.035	7.777	0.000	H5 Confirmed
Personal Values → Purchasing Intentions	0.226	0.059	3.806	0.009	H4 Confirmed
Perception of Value → Consumption Experience	0.204	0.048	4.237	0.006	H10 Confirmed
Consumption Experience → Purchasing Intentions	0.456	0.066	6.890	0.001	H9 Confirmed
Consumption Experience → Satisfaction	0.453	0.046	9.785	0.000	H8 Confirmed
Satisfaction → Purchasing Intentions	0.212	0.060	3.545	0.012	H11 Confirmed

Source: Elaborated by the Authors based on research data.

Table 4 shows that all of the relationships between the constructs had a critical *t* Test greater than 2.58, reflecting a p-value less than 0.02. These results confirm the reliability and validity of the path coefficients between the tested constructs. Through the Pearson determination (R^2) coefficients of the model, it is possible to evaluate the portion of the variance of the endogenous variables which can be explained by the structural model, which indicates its quality. According to Hair and Risher *et al.*, (2019), the value of R^2 is considered to be weak when it is equal to or less than 25 %, moderate when it is equal to 50%, and strong when it is close to 75%. The R^2 values of the constructs evaluated in the model are presented in Figure 2.

Global Perceived Quality (GPQ) is a second order reflexive construct composed of seven factors. The one that has the greatest effect on this construct is the quality of services, which has an R^2 of 82.8% and a path coefficient ($\wp$) of 0.910. Or in other words, services have a strong effect on the variance in GPQ. Similar results have been found in the work of Souki *et al.* (2020). The factor that least contributes to the explanation of GPQ is physical infrastructure, which has an R^2 of 38% and a path coefficient of 0.616, but it can still be considered to have an important explanatory effect depending on the adopted criteria.

In terms of testing the hypotheses, H6 seeks to evaluate the impact of GPQ on Satisfaction, and H7 evaluates the impact of GPQ on the Consumption Experience. The results show that GPQ effectively contributed to the explanation of Satisfaction ($R^2 = 78.8\%$). The path coefficient from GPQ → Satisfaction was $\wp = 0.348$ with a significance of 0.001. In the same way, GPQ contributed to the explanation of the Consumption Experience ($R^2 = 82.3$). In the relationship from GPQ → Consumption Experience, the path coefficient was $\wp = 0.396$ with a significance of 0.000.

These discoveries confirm hypotheses H6 and H7. Hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4 and H5 sought to verify the effects that Personal Values can have on Global Perceived Quality, Satisfaction, Consumption Experience, Purchasing Intentions, and Perceptions of Value. In a general manner, the results demonstrate that Personal Values affect and influence the explanation of all of the constructs cited above. We have verified that the determination coefficients (R^2) of the constructs affected by Personal Values, ranged from 66% to 82% of the explanation. Meanwhile, the path coefficients ($\wp$) between the constructs and Personal Values were shown to be appropriate with significance varying from 0.000 to 0.022.

These findings sustain and confirm hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4 and H5. Meanwhile, the

impact of the Consumption Experience on Satisfaction (H8) and Purchasing Intentions (H9), were also tested. The results demonstrate that the Consumption Experience strongly contributes by explaining 78.8% of the Satisfaction of the local farmers' market consumers. This relationship presents a path coefficient of 0.453 with a significance of 0.000. In addition, 72.3% of Purchasing Intentions were strongly affected by the Consumption Experience where the $\wp$ was 0.456 with a significance of 0.000. It is understood, therefore, that H8 and H9 were also confirmed. Finally, we tested H10 and H11. For the first hypothesis, we verified the impact of the Perception of Value on the Consumption Experience.

Thus, we verified that 82.3% of the Consumption Experience of the local farmers' market consumers was partly explained by the Perception of Value, complementing the $\wp$ of 0.204 and a significance of 0.006. For the second hypothesis, we tested the impact of Satisfaction on Purchasing Intentions. In this relationship, we identified that consumer Satisfaction directly affects 72.3% of the Purchasing Intentions of local farmers' market consumers. It also had a path coefficient of 0.212 with a significance of 0.012. That being so, hypotheses H10 and H11 were also confirmed.

Complementing the results above, we verified the Sizes of the Effects (f^2) for all of the constructs tested in this study. This test makes it possible to evaluate the contribution of an exogenous construct to the R² of an endogenous latent variable (Hair and Risher et al., 2019). Values for f^2 equal to 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 are considered respectively small, average and large for tests which involve multiple regressions (Cohen, 1992). All of the tested constructs had large f^2 effects (larger than 0.35), and it should be noted that the Consumption Experience, Satisfaction, and Personal Values are the constructs which most contributed to the explanation of the proposed model.

5. Final Considerations

This study has the following objectives: a) to verify the direct impacts of perceived quality for local farmers' market consumers on their satisfaction and their consumption experiences; b) to investigate the impacts of personal values on the consumption experience, purchasing intentions, and the perception of value; c) to test the impacts of the consumption experience on satisfaction and purchasing intentions; and d) to confirm the positive impact of satisfaction on the purchasing intentions of local farmers' market consumers. The results demonstrate that the quality of services and products delivered by small farmers were determinant in these consumers' understanding of perceived global quality and drove their consumption experiences and purchasing intentions.

Products from short chains provide various forms of information when they arrive at the consumer, and in the middle of so much information, quality becomes a relevant factor in the construction of a solid relationship of trust between producers and consumers, which stimulates local production in the agroecological area or artisanal production. In this manner, it is important to evaluate the consumer experience in short food chains, because within this context, price is not the most relevant factor to these consumers, who value biocultural elements, trust and the location as attributes in this journey.

In this way, some of the main contributions observed were that the quality of services and products were the constructs that most helped explain global perceived quality. In this case, local farmers' market sellers should intensify their attention to these items and strengthen/improve the infrastructure, accessibility and atmosphere of the local environment. We also have identified that to guarantee the satisfaction of local farmers' market consumers it is important to offer consumption experiences which promote pleasant moments there. We can emphasize that promoting global quality will also make local farmers' market consumers more satisfied.

One of this study's most important findings is its confirmation of Personal Values as an antecedent of various behavioral and attitudinal constructs. As mentioned by Schwartz (2012; 1994), personal values are rooted in consumers who carry them with them during the whole buying process. Thus, these values orient behavior, attitudes, and consumer intentions, and this finding becomes relevant within the context of this study, given that this region has received attention based on a migratory process that has united farmers from various locations first in the South, then the Southeast, and finally the Northeast of Brazil. This ends up promoting cultural diversity which is expressed through gastronomy, music, habits, customs and social practices. In this work, it was evident that Personal Values affect General Perceived Quality (GPQ), Consumer Satisfaction, the Consumption Experience, the Perception of Value and the Purchasing Intentions of consumers in local farmers' markets.

These farmers can promote nostalgic moments through regional music and gastronomy and rounds of conversation which recall their cities, their friendships, and customs, among other things, promoting a social environment where people meet their friends and celebrate their memories, creating a climate that promotes well-being and a sense of belonging and social recognition by their peers.

Finally, these consumers' purchasing intentions in local farmers' markets are strongly affected by consumption experiences, personal values and satisfaction. Thus, these farmers need to maintain and promote the satisfaction of these consumers by meeting their expectations and satisfying their needs. However, what most affected purchasing intentions were consumer experiences in this sense of promoting pleasant buying experiences which enchant consumers and these will increase the propensity of consumers to make purchases at their local farmers' market again. People frequent local farmers' markets for various reasons, such as eating, looking for new experiences, alleviating boredom, having fun, convenience, saving time, being close to other people, being close to family and friends, doing business, maintaining their social positions and gaining prestige and status.

Among this study's limitations we can cite the collection of our data which does not permit the generalization of the results, but it also does not discredit its findings. Various other interactions in the tested model could be evaluated such as, for example, the impact of GPQ in consumers' Perception of Value and Purchasing Intentions, among other things. As a suggestion for future studies, researchers can replicate this work in other farmers' markets or other types of markets and compare their results with this study's findings. New studies could also verify other relationships between the constructs tested in this work and confirm other hypotheses to complement this article.

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